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## HOMICIDE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

BY HARRY G. NUTT.

The period considered in this discussion of homicide in New Hampshire is thirty years, extending from 1873 to 1904. Recourse was had to the clerks of the county Superior Courts for lists of indictments, convictions, localities, and dates of homicides; to the State Prison records for the age and nativity of the murderers; to the lawyers who tried the cases, to the present clerks, and to contemporary accounts in the *Concord Monitor* and the *Manchester Mirror and Patriot* for the motive, weapon employed, and condition of the murderers.

Although the absolute number of homicides is too small to admit of a fine comparison between their frequency and the number of inhabitants in each county, the figures given in Table I should be used for reference. The population of the State since 1870 has increased by decades 9 per cent., 8.5 per cent., and 9.3 per cent. Two counties, Belknap and Carroll, show a decrease. The others have increased only through additions to their urban populations, being as they are in the throes of rural exodus. The old line rural families, representing superior stock physically and morally, are in course of rapid elimination, while the new families of native-born Americans immigrating to the rural districts from without the State are few in number, and represent a decidedly inferior stock. It is to the influx of foreign blood chiefly to her cities, but partly to her small towns, that New Hampshire owes her increase in population.

All indictments for murder and manslaughter, classified by counties and five-year periods appear in Table II. Not more than one indictment against an individual for the same crime is counted, but more than one indictment against dif-

ferent individuals for the same crime are counted. The dates refer to the commitment of the crimes, not to the legal action. The most populous counties are here shown to have the most indictments. Altogether there are 71 indictments for murder and 45 for manslaughter, which, divided by decades, gives us respectively for murder, 27, 22, and 22; for manslaughter, 6, 23, and 16; and for both, 32, 45, and 38. The record for manslaughter is better for the first decade than for the second and third, but better for the third than the second. Including the indictments for murder, and taking into account the increase in the population of the State, the last decade, compared not only with the second, but with the first, shows the better record.

Just as some cases of homicide are not followed by indictments, some indictments, as shown in Table III, are not followed by convictions. 37, or 31.9 per cent. of the individuals indicted, were not convicted. In two of these cases the respondents, being found insane, were committed to the State Asylum. The fact that among the convictions there has been a much smaller proportion of murder cases than among the indictments indicates a tendency to return a verdict or accept a plea of a less serious homicide than that charged to the respondent.

The distinction between the degrees of homicide in this table is as follows: murder in the first degree indicates malice aforethought and premeditation; murder in the second degree, malice aforethought and no premeditation; manslaughter in the first degree, killing in heat of blood or violent passion; manslaughter in the second degree, killing by gross negligence. (See *New Hampshire Public Statutes*, Chap. 278.) Six convictions of manslaughter appear on the records with the degree unspecified.

The most populous counties show the most convictions. In the State there have been 42 convictions for murder and 31 for manslaughter; or, by decades, 15, 14, and 13 for murder, 8, 17, and 12 for manslaughter, and 23, 31, and

25 for both. Thus, combining murder and manslaughter convictions, we find fewer in the last than the preceding decade, and, relative to the increasing population, fewer than in the first decade.

Table IV shows the indictments and convictions for those towns in each of which more than one indictment has been found. The populations given are for 1890, since the homicides were grouped chiefly about that year. These 17 towns, with 30.9 per cent. of the total population of the State, have had 53.4 per cent. of its indictments and 53.4 per cent. of its convictions. In about 175 towns no indictment has been found. Although the largest urban communities in the State appear at the head of this table, the extremely small number of cases against them compared with their population fail to justify the conclusion that the urban population in the State is specially addicted to homicide.

Table V shows the county in which each homicide was committed, with reference to the nativity of the convicted murderers, including as "murderers" persons convicted of manslaughter. Of these murderers 18, or 22.8 per cent., were foreign-born. The census of 1890 gives 19.2 per cent. of the total population of the State as foreign-born, and among the foreign-born the proportion of children incapable of homicide is, of course, very much larger than it is among the native-born. Hence it appears that the foreign-born have contributed less than their share rather than more to homicide in the State.

25, or 40.9 per cent., of the native-born convicted of homicide were not born in New Hampshire. Since the census of 1890 gives only 17 per cent. of the total population resident in New Hampshire as born in other States, the record of this particular class for homicide is comparatively black. This fact speaks for the inferiority of American immigrants to New Hampshire. Of the murderers born in the State more than half committed their crimes outside their native county.

Canada and Ireland, the only foreign countries to furnish more than a single murderer each, are most largely represented in the foreign-born population resident in the State. Of other States, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Maine, those in closest proximity, show the largest quotas.

A classification of convicted murderers by age and degree of homicide appears in Table VI. The single case of an age "unknown" is that of a boy committed to the Reform School instead of the State Prison.

In Table VII is shown the condition of the murderers, whether drunk or sober, with reference to the weapons which they employed. The weapon in one case of homicide, where death resulted from both clubbing and shooting, is given as a "firearm"; and in another case, where death resulted from kicking and clubbing, the weapon is given as a "club." Any hard implement used as a club is here considered a club. Among the homicides with weapon unspecified, one death resulted from a push from a wagon, one from a throw downstairs, one from setting fire with kerosene to clothing, three from poison, and six (infanticides) from drowning or strangulation.

From a careful examination of newspaper accounts of these New Hampshire homicides, the writer is convinced that no accurate classification of motives is possible. In the first place such accounts, with the exception perhaps of stenographic reports of trials, are for these data unreliable. In the second an exact determination of another man's unconfessed motive, practically impossible for any deed, is seldom more so than for a homicide. Here we enter that field of passion and unusual mental phenomena which must be reserved for psychological analysis.

TABLE I.  
POPULATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE BY COUNTIES.

County.	1870.	1880.	1890.	1900.
Belknap . . . . .	17,681	17,948	20,321	19,526
Carroll . . . . .	17,332	18,224	18,124	16,895
Cheshire . . . . .	27,265	28,734	29,579	31,321
Coös . . . . .	14,932	18,580	23,211	29,468
Grafton . . . . .	39,103	38,788	37,217	40,844
Hillsboro . . . . .	64,238	75,634	93,247	112,640
Merrimac . . . . .	42,151	46,300	49,435	52,430
Rockingham . . . . .	47,297	49,064	49,650	51,118
Strafford . . . . .	30,243	35,558	38,442	39,337
Sullivan . . . . .	18,058	18,161	17,304	18,009
New Hampshire . . . . .	318,300	346,991	376,530	411,588

TABLE VII.  
INDICTMENTS.

County.	Murder.						Manslaughter.						Murder and Man-slaughter. Total.	
	1873-1878.	1878-1883.	1883-1888.	1888-1893.	1893-1898.	1898-1903.	Total.	1873-1878.	1878-1883.	1883-1888.	1888-1893.	1893-1898.		1898-1903.
Belknap . . . . .	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	2	5	7
Carroll . . . . .	3	-	-	-	1	1	4	1	-	1	-	-	2	6
Cheshire . . . . .	6	-	1	1	-	2	10	-	-	-	3	-	3	13
Cooks . . . . .	1	-	-	1	4	-	6	-	-	-	-	1	1	7
Grafton . . . . .	3	-	1	5	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	2	11
Hillsboro . . . . .	1	1	-	2	3	1	8	1	2	-	-	3	-	14
Merimac . . . . .	2	1	-	1	2	1	7	-	-	1	2	-	3	10
Rockingham . . . . .	1	2	3	3	1	-	10	-	1	-	5	1	7	17
Strafford . . . . .	1	3	2	2	3	3	14	-	1	4	3	1	4	26
Sullivan. . . . .	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	5
New Hampshire . . . .	19	8	7	15	14	8	71	2	4	8	15	8	8	116





TABLE IV.  
TOWNS WITH TWO OR MORE INDICTMENTS EACH.

Town.	Population in 1890.	Indictments.					Convictions.								
		1873- 1878.	1878- 1883.	1883- 1888.	1888- 1893.	1893- 1898.	1898- 1903.	Total.	1873- 1878.	1878- 1883.	1883- 1888.	1888- 1893.	1893- 1898.	1898- 1903.	Total.
Manchester (Hills.) . .	44,126	-	1	-	1	4	-	6	-	1	-	-	3	-	4
Nashua (Hills.) . . .	19,311	1	1	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
Concord (Mer.) . . . .	17,004	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dover (Strat.) . . . . .	12,790	-	1	1	1	1	5	9	-	-	-	1	1	2	4
Portsmouth (Rock.) . .	9,827	-	1	3	1	-	-	5	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Keene (Chesh.) . . . . .	7,446	4	-	-	3	-	1	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Rochester (Strat.) . . .	7,396	-	-	3	1	-	1	5	-	-	3	1	-	1	5
Somersworth (Strat.) . .	6,207	-	-	2	2	1	-	5	-	-	2	2	1	-	5
Laconia (Bel.) . . . . .	6,143	1	1	1	-	-	2	5	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
Berlin (Coös) . . . . .	3,729	-	-	-	1	2	-	3	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
Rollinsford (Strat.) . .	2,003	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Plymouth (Graft.) . . .	1,852	1	-	1	-	1	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Wilton (Hills.) . . . . .	1,850	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Gorham (Coös) . . . . .	1,710	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Seabrook (Rock.) . . .	1,672	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ossipee (Car.) . . . . .	1,630	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Durham (Strat.) . . . . .	871	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Total . . . . .	145,567	10	6	12	10	14	10	62	7	4	10	5	9	6	41

TABLE V.  
NATIVITY OF CONVICTED MURDERERS.

County of Crime.	Nativity.													
	Number of Mur- derers.	New Hampshire.			Massa- chusetts.	Ver- mont.	Maine.	New York.	Pennsyl- vania.	Ire- land.	Canada.	Other Foreign Countries.	Total Native United States.	Total Foreign born.
		Same County.	Other County.	Total.										
Belknap . .	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	3
Carroll . .	6	2	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	1
Cheshire . .	6	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1
Cooks . .	7	1	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	4	3
Grafton . .	7	-	5	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-
Hillsboro . .	9	3	2	5	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	8	1
Merimac . .	7	2	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	2
Rockingham .	12	4	1	5	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	8	4
Strafford . .	18	1	7	8	3	-	2	1	1	1	1	1	15	3
Sullivan . .	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1
New Hampshire	79	16	20	36	12	6	4	2	1	6	8	4	61	18

TABLE VI.  
AGE OF CONVICTED MURDERERS.

Homicide.	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	Unknown.	Total.
Murder 1 . . . .	-	1	2	2	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	11
Murder 2 . . . .	-	4	4	5	4	6	2	3	1	2	-	-	-	31
Manslaughter 1 .	1	2	-	3	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	11
Manslaughter 2 .	4	3	3	2	3	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	20
Manslaughter un- specified . . .	2	-	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Total . . . . .	7	10	10	14	10	9	7	5	1	3	1	1	1	79

TABLE VII.  
WEAPON AND CONDITION OF MURDERERS.

Weapon.	Instances.	Condition.		
		Drunk.	Sober.	Unknown.
Firearm . . . . .	30	13	13	4
Knife . . . . .	8	4	1	3
Fist or Foot . . . . .	8	7	—	1
Club . . . . .	18	7	6	5
Poison . . . . .	3	—	3	—
Other . . . . .	12	1	7	4
Total . . . . .	79	32	30	17